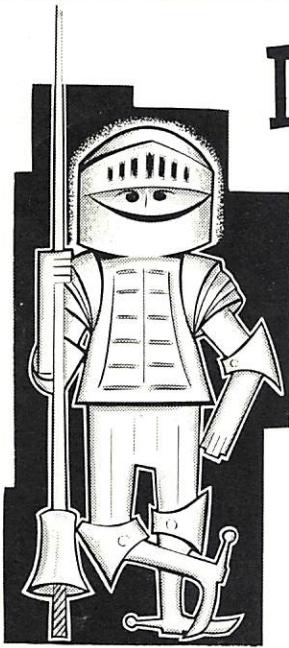


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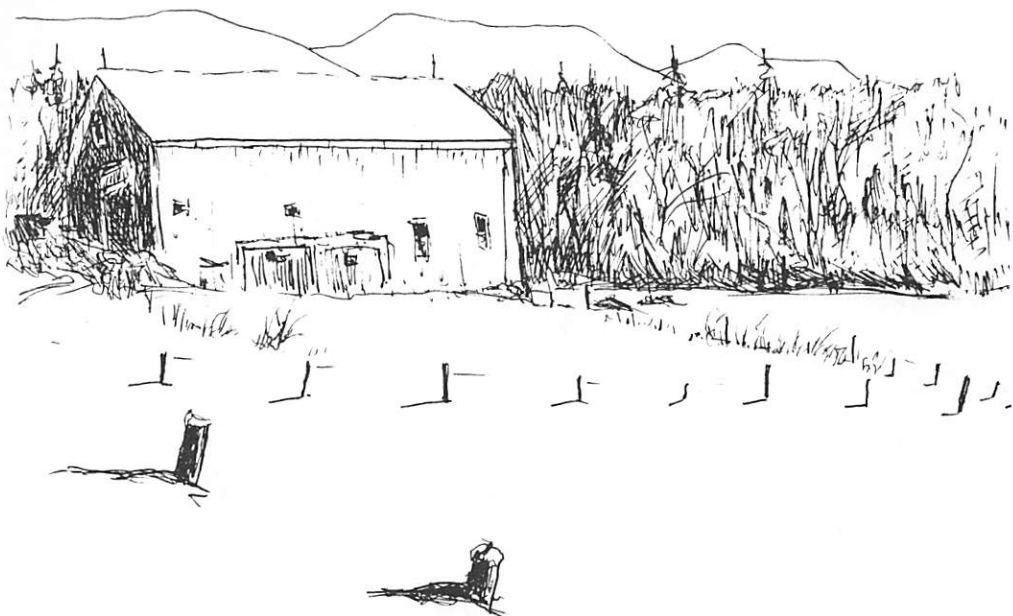
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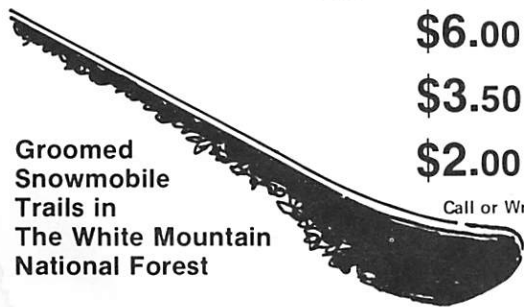
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I have just finished cancelling my appointment with Les Otten of Sunday River Skiway for the fourth time in ten days because of bad weather when my neighbor storms in to tell me, teeth clenched, eyes steely, that, for the seventh time in an hour, he's stranded his jeep in a snowbank out front.

This issue of **BitterSweet** is devoted to making the most of winter. Weathering the storm, so to speak, looking on the bright side of three-months-plus worth of postponed appointments, snow-stranded vehicles, cars that won't start and roads which refuse to let loose their icy cover.

Attempts to accentuate the positive rely a lot on winter sports, which would not exist without frigid temperatures and substantial snows. Cathy Flynn braved an encounter with members of the Morse clan to learn about family snowmobiling sessions (page 18) and joined Jay Woolsey to talk about the more solitary sport of snowshoeing (page 14). On page 20, Kevin Hamilton reveals Ernie Sparke's supposedly foolproof method of ice fishing. In *Heading Out* (page 24), we take a look at who skis where and why more people than ever are heading to the Oxford Hills on weekdays this year.

But to really win at winter, you've got to do

more than take up an outdoor sport. You've got to train yourself to be a sometimes loser, to admit defeat in the face of winter's fury, to retreat inside and enjoy it — all of which goes against the grain of our modern "can do" mentality, but it sure saves wear and tear on the nerves. In your retreat, you might want to try concocting a warm, soothing drink (recipes, page 51); read some literature either by or about local citizens (sweet finds, page 42); or tackle some conditioning exercises to make those outdoor activities more enjoyable (page 32).

It's a sure bet that we're in for at least a few more storms of the type described by Waterford's Artemus Ward in his essay reprinted on page 27 as "frowning fiercely upon us — the innocent and helpless." We may as well add them to Ward's list of other local legacies — "maple sugar, virtue, shrewdness, strong arms and big chests, pickerel, rosy cheeks and true hearts, ever-busy knitting needles,... churches, school-houses, pine logs, scenery that knocks Switzerland into a disordered chapeau and air so pure that the New Yorker is sorry he can't bottle some of it and carry it to the metropolis for daily use."

Sandy Wilhelm

BitterSweet

Notes:

PLUGGING PHILATELY

The young boy behind the broad grin and flashy *Special Delivery* tee-shirt was Todd Davis, son of Norway Postmaster Fred Davis, out to drum up some local interest in stamp collecting. The younger Davis set up shop one Saturday morning during the holidays in the lobby of the Norway Post Office where a steady stream of onlookers admired his five-year-old collection, as well as that of veteran collector Al Davis of North Norway, whose display included stamps from all the countries overrun by Hitler during World War II.

While expertly juggling a half empty bottle of Pepsi, Davis extolled the virtues of his hobby:

"There's so much you can learn through stamps," said Todd, who lives in Auburn where there is an established stamp collector's club. "You can concentrate on history, space, flowers, birds, animals and many other subjects."

His father and South Paris Postmaster Bob Kessell were on hand to plug the Post Office's special collectors' kits. Mini albums, consisting of one of every stamp issued in a particular year, are on sale for \$4 as a sort of starter set for beginning collectors. The men also displayed examples of the kind of specialized packets Todd described, such as a set showing different modes of transportation and another highlighting flags of the world.

"We recommend that people specialize to make collecting more interesting," said Kessell. Boys seem to go in for sports and

space, he said. Birds and butterflies are big with the girls.

Besides being, at least in some instances, works of art in their own right, printed stamps are a darn good investment, a point which Kessell was quick to make. "You can always take them out of your album and stick them on a letter," he said. "Their value can go nowhere but up."

The 1973-issued Love stamp, incorporating artist Robert Indiana's trendy design, cost eight cents when it was printed. The stamp's value is now 16 cents. A 24-cent stamp which mistakenly showed an airplane upside down in its 1928 printing is now valued at \$45,000.

The Postmasters say there's always been a concerted effort on the part of the Post Office to promote stamp collecting. After some slack years, they say they're beginning to see a rebirth of interest in the hobby, particularly from elementary school teachers, who are apparently aware of the activity's educational value.

"I really don't know much about it," confessed Diane Zutter as she stopped by Todd's stable with members of her family. "We've saved some stamps from when the kids were young, but that's been about it."

But, Mrs. Zutter's daughter had heard about the move afoot to organize a local stamp club in conjunction with the YMCA and thought she might be interested in signing up.

"It seems like a good way to learn about a lot of things," said Mrs. Zutter and her daughter nodded her agreement.

BACK TO BASICS

During the holidays, we received the following admonishment in correspondence from the Oxford County Community Services Agency:

"Before you start preparing your (holiday) yummys of fudge, fruitcake and fluffy delights, take a minute to evaluate the recipe and see if you will gain anything other than pounds from it. A fresh fruit salad can be as attractive and colorful on the table as a gelatin salad, composed basically of artificial coloring and flavoring and sugar... Kids and adults often link Christmas with sweets. If you can fill stockings with peanuts and oranges, rather than candy and cavities, both their health and your pocketbook will benefit from this decision."

We applauded the no-nonsense approach to holiday feasting and decided to track down Linda Haegele, supervisor of OCCS's new nutrition program, to find out what had prompted the mailing.

A medical technician in New York City prior to moving to the area and taking over cooking duties at the West Bethel Children's Center, Haegele told us that national health statistics have deteriorated so badly during the past 10 years that the federal government has decided it's time to do something to reverse the trend. Federal dollars, like those being used to fund the OCCS program, are being pumped into all kinds of community-based efforts to reeducate people on ways to eat their way to better health.

At the root of the problem, according to Haegele, is a mechanized lifestyle which dictates that Americans eat processed, refined foods, full of an estimated 5,000 additives, including artificial coloring and flavorings, preservatives and texturizers. The average American consumes about five pounds of chemical additives a year —

additives which are linked to mental illness, learning disabilities, and all types of medical disorders. In fact, carbohydrate consumption and sugar addiction is believed by many to be harder to kick than alcohol addiction, according to Haegele.

At a series of workshops scheduled throughout the winter, Haegele is going to try to get people to give up their pre-packaged, hurry-up meal helpers and get back to basics.

"We're not talking about freaky health foods like seaweed and wheat germ," she says cheerily. "What we're stressing is natural, unprocessed foods. Plain homestyle cooking, like regular oatmeal or corn flakes instead of fruity, sugared cereals. Food that's cheaper and better for you."

She says she's prepared for the reeducation process to take some time. With about 70 percent of the nation's women working these days, many traditional cooks have been forced to resort to fast, prepared foods of the junk variety in order to get dinner on the table at all, she says. Her workshops, scheduled at local mills and before women's groups, will stress techniques for preparing equally as fast and easy basic meals, designed to improve health and, thereby, cut medical costs.

Come spring, Haegele will board her nutrition-mobile and head into the hinterlands, carting film strips and tapes, kiddie comic books and recipes of the back-to-basics ingredient.

"Established ideas and patterns involving food are hard to break," admits Haegele. "But, the need is so great. It's impossible to eat the way most Americans do and not be filled with chemical additives. It's hard enough for the body to handle one additive. But, taken in combination with another, or with any kind of medication, it's just phenomenal what can happen to you."



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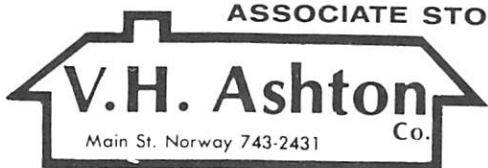
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Jay Lewis Woolsey doesn't feel out of step. He drives a late model compact car, has a fondness for collegiate coats and ties and faces the winter elements bundled in fashionable down.

But, at a time when those around him are jumping aboard speedy snowmobiles or strapping on sporty cross country skis in record numbers, Woosley has opted to trudge the great out-of-doors atop a pair of sturdy, twenty-year-old snowshoes.

"Quite simply, I enjoy it," he says of one of

JAY WOOLSEY:

Snowshoeing:

A Simple Sport

by Cathy Flynn

One of the world's oldest forms of winter travel still holds an appeal for modern man.



man's oldest forms of winter travel.

"There's an inherent benefit too," the blonde, 39-year-old Hebron Academy instructor quips from an armchair in his modest three-room apartment. "You can always follow your own tracks back."

Despite the advent of the snowmobile and the growing popularity of cross-country skiing, Woolsey thinks snowshoeing is the only way to go. Far easier than summer hiking because it involves walking on top of fallen trees or impenetrable "blowdown,"

snowshoeing, for him, is unsurpassed for winter recreation. Whether walking through woods or up mountainsides on his set of "pickerel"-type snowshoes, the handsome outdoorsman has steadfastly refused to be caught up in either of the current crazes.

An avid canoer, who coaches junior varsity soccer, tennis and kayaking, and also advises the school's Outing Club, Woolsey believes there's no comparison between hiking a trail and driving a vehicle over the

cont. next page

same road.

"I have no use for snowmobiles," he admits in a characteristically soft-spoken manner. "I could put a motor on my boat, too, but I want the added benefit of the quiet."

He's never been on a pair of cross-country skis.

Preferring to hike on snowshoes without the aid of ski poles, Woolsey simply grabs nearby tree trunks to boost himself up steep terrain or he uses an eight-foot-or-so pole for support. He is steady-paced, easygoing and deliberate; the same way he behaves during his busy day teaching German language classes at the Academy, counseling and planning curricula, all part of his duties as Director of Studies, the private school equivalent of guidance counselor.

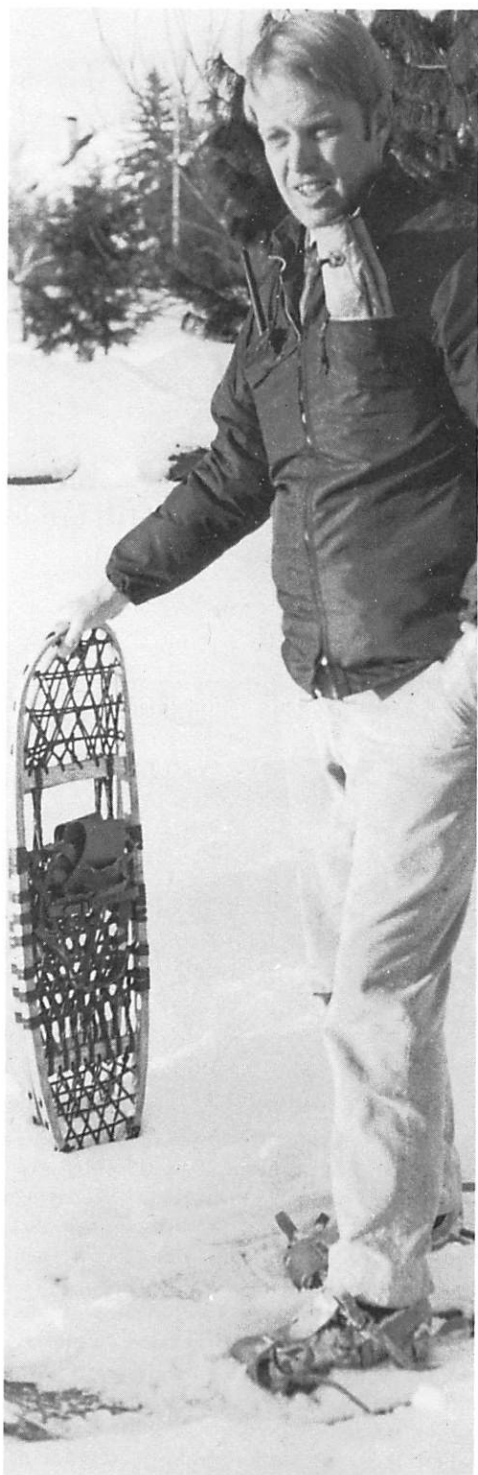
Sometimes Woolsey is able to roust undergraduates to hike with him on weekends up Streaked Mountain in South Paris, Tumbledown Mountain near Avon, or Caribou Mountain in the White Mountain National Forest, west of Bethel. But, most of the time, he is alone.

"That has never been difficult for me," he says of the quiet, isolated time spent in the woods.

It is not surprising that Woolsey is able to outpace students on cross-country skis. The skiers must herringbone (sidestep) up mountainous terrain or deliberately fall to slow themselves when coming down. Skiers need open ground and few gullies or ditches. Woolsey needs only the out-of-doors.

"In my senior year at college, I broke my leg playing soccer. Those were the days of mandatory physical education so I went out for skiing. The first day out I twisted the same leg and I didn't want to spend another eight weeks in a cast," he tells me, matter-of-factly.

Snowshoeing seemed the safest way for him to meet requirements at the University of Michigan, where he was studying for his master's degree. So he ordered a pair of snowshoes (called the "pickerel" style for the long, narrow shape) from the L. L. Bean mail order firm in Freeport, Maine and he has been walking on them every winter since. He even did some modest snowshoeing in the



Jay Woolsey

Alps while he was working for U. S. Army Intelligence in Germany during the 1960's.

As he talks, he crosses his legs and slouches in his chair. An elbow-high bookshelf displays canoeing guides, maps of the Appalachian Trail and a manual about how to stay alive in the woods. Overhead, a three-dimensional map of Maine mountains covers almost one whole wall of the small living room.

He recalls a time in college when he pinpointed a mountain on a map, drove several hundred miles to find the place, only to have an ice storm keep him from making the climb.

"I've tried three times to snowshoe up Azicohos Mountain," (west of Rangeley) he confesses. "But I've always gotten lost."

When trails are obliterated by snow and markers are buried, logging roads are often impossible to follow, he explains in self-defense.

Oldest Form of Travel

Snowshoes were designed centuries ago, and are one of the oldest forms of winter travel. They consist of lightweight wooden frames, strengthened by two cross pieces and strung with neoprene or lacquer-dipped rawhide webbing. Leather harnesses bind the foot to the snowshoe and a person can walk in fluffy snow without sinking.

To illustrate the finer points of the sport, Woolsey invites me to see his outing club slides which he proudly flashes on the side of his kitchen refrigerator.

"We always try to walk with at least eight or ten people in the group," he explains, occasionally allowing a canoeing shot to make its way into the winter hiking series. "That way the lead person, who has the hardest job of breaking trail, can switch off leap-frog fashion with the rest of us. Keeps any one of us from getting too exhausted."

As we talk, Woolsey checks periodically with the Hebron Post Office, which acts as an emergency dispatcher for the Hebron-Buckfield Rescue Service when Woolsey is away from his telephone. He drops everything, day and night, to volunteer with the service.

"Pardon me while I change my clothes," he says casually, in preparation for our

photography session. "I can't snowshoe in a suit coat."

He comes back wearing tan, wide-wale corduroy pants and a casual shirt, a walkie-talkie tucked in one pocket and a package of cigarettes in another.

"Quite frankly, I enjoy both," he says of his contrasting roles as rugged snowshoer and somewhat paunchy, cigarette-smoking private school administrator and teacher.

The "bearpaw" type of shoe, which leaves a print in the snow resembling oversized bear tracks, will hold a heavier man but is awkward for the novice because it lets the ankles sideswipe one another, Woolsey explains as he helps me adjust the buckles on my frozen harnesses.

The "modified bearpaw" snowshoes are narrower. Other designs have tails which weight down the back and keep the toe of the shoe from getting snagged in crusty snow. If snowshoes get wet (walking through slush or across rivers) snow and ice can stick to them causing them to weigh up to 20 pounds apiece.

I watch enviously as Woolsey's 5'10", 160-pound frame glides gracefully on his narrow snowshoes, a type popular in competitive racing. At today's prices, they would cost about \$75.

After seeing me struggle to back up far enough for a picture, he says offhandedly, "Oh, you can't walk backwards on snowshoes. The tails stick into the snow."

There's a knack for walking on the things without getting tired, he tells me. The secret is to walk naturally, allowing the foot to pivot through the foot-hole in the snowshoe. Beginners like me tend to take too long a stride and to lift their legs too high, as if to keep the snowshoes from touching one another. With a normal gait, the shoes will actually pass over each other a little, he says.

It sounds simple and it's the simplicity of the sport that Woolsey likes.

"I don't want to get outdoors and find I have the wrong wax on my skis," he says, scoffing at the scientific waxing required for cross-country. "I couldn't be bothered with that. I just want to put on my snowshoes and go."



CLIFFORD & TRUDY MORSE & FAMILY:

Snowmobiling:

Happy Trails

Snowmobiling is a weekend way of life for nearly 5,000 Oxford County residents.

by Cathy Flynn

Flynn is a freelance journalist.

I know I am at the right place when half a dozen black-suited snowmobilers rev up their machines and varoom across the road in front of me. Even with the protection of my automobile, a feeling of uneasiness runs through me. Just who are these helmeted snowmobiling enthusiasts I'm supposed to interview?

They arrive at the Morse family house on Crockett Ridge Road just ahead of me. We

are to meet around Clifford and Trudy Morse's table to talk about their family's weekly snowmobiling field days.

For the Morses, snowmobiling is a way of life on weekends, as it is for the nearly 5,000 Oxford County residents to register snowmobiles last year. Many of these fans belong to one of a dozen clubs in the Hills area — clubs which join together to groom more than 700 miles of trails which weave



Stanley Morse: Airbound



The Morse Clan

throughout the area towns.

They tell me that every weekend throughout the winter, the 16 of them, and sometimes more, ride 16 breeds of Cats, Blizzards, Deeres, Polaris, Ski Doo's and Olympics through trails and woods from Norway to Greenwood and beyond.

As they file into the Morse family kitchen, their faces are barely visible behind dark helmets and red and black clothing and "think snow" patches.

Clifford Morse, 45, a logger by trade, fidgets behind his greasy jacket. After lighting a thin cigar and drinking a few sips of coffee, he is able to tell me how much work it is to keep his machines going.

"I do more tinkering with a snowmobile than I do with a car," he says. "They're not made to last."

"But they're built better than they used to be," observes his wife Trudy, 44, a Beeline Fashion queen.

"They now have heated handlebars, better seats and they are more stable," she says while pointing out the crown she won for selling the most Beeline clothes in her district.

The Kuvaja boys, Stanley, 21; Timmy, 18; and Steven, 17 are noticeably restless and sweaty beneath their full-piece snowsuits. The sun is shining, it is bone-chilling cold outside, and it's a perfect Sunday afternoon for snowmobiling. They have been indoors for ten long minutes.

The Kuvaja boys are from Greenwood and they like to ride behind the group where there is plenty of room for snow mogul acrobatics. From the rear, they can also spot trouble in the line and assist riders who get stuck.

"Did you see that Ski Doo down at the Marina?" 20-year-old Karen asks nobody in

cont. page 34

ERNIE SPARKE:

Ice Fishing:

THE GREAT ESCAPE

by Kevin Hamilton



Hamilton is an announcer with Norway radio station WOXO/WXIV.

Uncle Ernie advises jigging your line this winter if the ice fishing is a little slow. Underwater game will often spot your bait, but ignore it until it dances.

My advice is to take his word as the Bible or, at the very least, the gospel according to *Field and Stream*. I have witnessed Ernie Sparke land a 72-pound cod from the depths of the Atlantic, while the most excitement I hooked into belonged in a ten gallon aquarium. I have gawked at his countless stringers of trout, while my own chain spent an entire summer wrapped in its original cellophane packaging. I have envied him since long before I was old enough to bait my own hook.

Ernie and his wife Ruth moved to Bridgton from Long Island in 1963, after he bought the warm weather resort, Holiday Inn, from his brother Chip. Shortly thereafter, he changed the resort's name to Holiday Cottages to discourage unsolicited upholsterers' conventions and embalming seminars. At about the same time, the "Uncle" began to be attached to Ernie's name by vacationing youngsters. "Mr. Sparke" was much too formal for the owner of that

constant, high-pitched chuckle and that friendly Santa Claus physique.

Ernie Sparke is 57 years old, but you'd never know he was past the half-century mark. He fishes and maintains the cabins and his farm all summer, hunts in the fall and fishes again all winter, in between shifts running the lifts at Pleasant Mountain Ski Area. He says he's never worked a 9-5 job in his life, shrugging, "Why work all year just for two weeks off?"

Ernie grew up on the Island in New York during the Depression. He quit high school after two weeks (with "no regrets") and bought 100 baby chicks. At 14, he was his own boss, and handled two jobs, counting his responsibilities on his father's farm. Soon his inventory tripled, and he made his move. A local feed company agreed to supply him with three months' worth of grain, which Ernie would pay for when the supply ran out. He managed the payment, and wound up raising 100,000 broilers and 10,000 turkeys a year, running a trio of farms at the same time.

When he started getting blamed for "all the flies in the neighborhood" and the kids

began throwing rocks at the turkeys, it was time to move on. Ernie set up a greenhouse, upped that eventually to three 55-footers and ran a florist business with his wife. However, the Sparkes were riveted to their jobs. The Island became more developed, taxes rose, and Ernie and Ruth moved to Maine.

It's only natural that, after a lifetime of outside work, Ernie would turn outdoors for his recreation. And, as in business, he makes it a point to see his good times are successful.

The standard ice fishing rig is constructed of pieces of wood measuring about 18" x 1" x 1/2". They form a cross when opened, and rest over a hole carved in the frozen lake surface, which can be either 8" or 10" in diameter, depending on the size of the drill, or auger, used. The drill itself can be either hand or power driven.

A flexible flag pole is attached to the trap, and is bent over and clipped to a portion of the rig just above the water level. The reel is a free spool model, located directly below the water, to prevent it from freezing up. Once a fish takes the bait below, the flag is tripped, alerting the winter angler, who sets the hook, and pulls his catch in by hand. Traps run near \$3.00 apiece and, since a license allows five holes to be fished at one time, suppliers normally make rigs available on a "5-fer" deal.

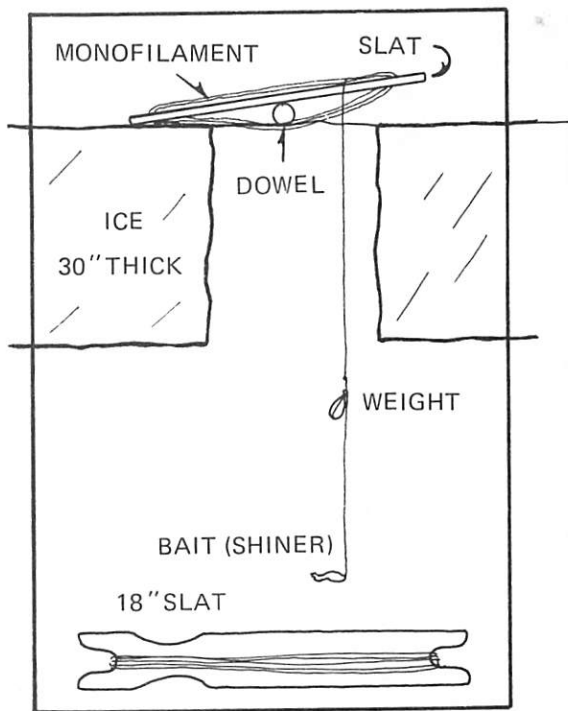
But if you want to catch fish, listen to Uncle Ernie. A few years ago, a friend introduced him to a homemade ice fishing contraption and Sparkie has sworn by it ever since. The rig is made of an 18" slat, a slim dowel approximately the same length, and monofilament line. Niches are carved into both ends of the slat, as well as on either side, a few inches from the tip (see diagram). Ernie winds his line around the 18" slat so that each time he lets out two lengths of line, he knows he's gone down three feet deeper in the water.

The dowel is slipped between the extra filament and the slat, and then rested over the hole. He loops his line around the thin part of the stick and balances it on the dowel, facing the wind. Doing so saves him the frustration of having to constantly strip his hook, and spares him running from his ice

house only to find the thing setting his flag has been nothing but a strong breeze. The fish will make the slat tip, no matter how little the pull. And, to top it off, Ernie says, "It doesn't cost a thing."

In the summer when the cottages are open, Ernie is every kid's best friend, taking them all for rides in his boat on Highland Lake, or letting them ride with him in his truck to the dump, running his weekly chicken cook-outs and fish fries, water skiing, and hosting the annual kids-against-the-grownups softball game on the Fourth of July.

But, for now, a day out on the lake in his ice house will do Uncle Ernie just fine. He'll go out with his buddies, alone or with Ruthie, cook up a few hot dogs and sip a can



of beer, which, he says, "there's never any trouble keeping cold."

Hearing his high-pitched giggle echoing across the lake, you'd almost swear it was summer again.



THE WEATHERVANE

Fiction by Chris Hodgkins

Hodgkins is a teacher at Oxford Hills High School.

The old woman sat in the shadows and waited. "The sheriff said he'd be here on the way home," she thought. "He'll see for himself how bad it is. He'll know what to do."



The last light of day filled the farmhouse kitchen with shadows. The old woman sat in the shadows and waited. In front of her on the oak table was a mound of apple peelings and eight freshly peeled apples. Later the old woman would make a fire in the black Atlantic wood stove and let the apples bake slowly. The kitchen would smell like cider and cinnamon and ginger. And in the morning before there was any light in the east she would pour cream over one of the apples. It would be her breakfast. And she would have a cup of tea.

But now the old woman sat quietly and waited while the pink violence of the sky faded into night. Her gnarled hands lay in the apple peelings like small dead animals.



The kitchen was simple: the oak table, two chairs, a wood cook stove, a hand pump perched like a vulture on the edge of the black iron sink, a window by the table, a crank phone on the wall, and also on the wall, a banjo clock which pumped out the heartbeats of the room.

In the coming darkness the old woman's mind fluttered.

"The sheriff," she thought. "The sheriff will be here. I must think to offer him an apple. He probably won't have time for that foolishness. That's what John would have said. 'There's no time for that foolishness.' John's eyes would snap when he said that. Beautiful blue eyes as cold as steel. Snap like fire. Up on the horses they snapped when he drove by that first time. When he drove by Father's with his new team and wagon and the white shirt. His back was straight and his eyes cold blue and snapping.

"I was afraid of John," she thought. "John wouldn't want me to bother the sheriff with apples. Just tell him what happened.

"The sheriff said he'd be here on the way home. He'll see for himself how bad it is. He'll know what to do."

Later the tall man came through the door slowly with the beams from his flashlight bouncing into the corners of the room and settling finally on the woman's face. He held the light steadily as if examining something mysterious, then moved it away from the old woman's eyes. He unbuttoned his red and black checked jacket, took off his gloves, and stepped quickly to the wood stove. Finding a match, he removed the chimney from the small kerosine lamp that sat on the shelf above the stove. The man's large hands moved over the tiny lamp with an easy

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Heading Out

WHO SKIS WHERE AND WHY?



Mt. Abram's Donald Cross

Maine ski slopes at mid-week have always been the province of the locals. Now, thanks to a lively price war raging in these parts, skiers can stake their claims at any one of the four areas located within a comfortable commute of Norway-South Paris at a cost of next to nothing.

Weekday lift rates of \$5 at Bridgton's Pleasant Mountain, \$3.75 at Sunday River in Bethel, \$3.50 at Evergreen Valley in East Stoneham and \$3 at Mount Abram in Locke

Mills are about the lowest anywhere in the country.

"It's the bargain of a lifetime," says Les Otten, Sherburne Corporation's manager at Sunday River, where weekday rates were dropped this year from \$7.50 to \$3.75 in order to hold onto a share of weekday business.

The unlikely catalysts for the current price competition are Donald and Norton

("Wimpy") Cross, owners of Mt. Abram, who two years ago slashed their weekday rates in half in a desperation move to fill their parking lot during traditionally slow times. Low-key and affable, the Cross boys are hardly highpowered, cut-throat entrepreneur types. They claim to have gone ahead with their price cut without so much as a thought of what the effect would be on other areas. And they bristle at any talk of a "price war."

"We tried for years to build up a weekday crowd," says Don. "But, we never could manage to break even. Then, we dropped the prices and things began to change."

The Crosses, who pride themselves on meticulous grooming of Mt. Abram slopes, say their pricing has changed the face of local skiing dramatically.

"We've made skiing more accessible," says Norton. "Now, poor people can ski along with the rich people."

Increased volume has more than made up for the loss of revenue from price reduction and the area is closer than ever before to making money during the week, he says.

The problem, however, is that there appears to be not enough volume for all the areas. Of the nine ski resorts situated in

Maine, four are within a 45-minute commute of Norway-South Paris. That's pretty close quarters. As a result, in order to keep pace with Mt. Abram, the other three mountains dropped their weekly rates this year. And most of them aren't happy about it.

Now that the lifts are running again at Evergreen Valley, management is struggling to cultivate a core group of local weekday skiers to keep the mountain going from weekend to weekend this season. At a lift rate of \$3.50, ski manager Chuck Truman says the place can't begin to break even. But, to stay competitive, that's the price Truman settled on. And, he's determined to tough it out.

At Sunday River, Les Otten says that rather than run the risk of losing an already established weekday business, the mountain dropped its rates dramatically this year. At \$3.75, the mountain can't begin to make money, he says.

"You'd have to be at 100 per cent volume for the whole season," claims Otten.

Otten, who says he's taking flak from Vermont and New Hampshire ski area personnel about the low pricing, admits it's possible that the prices might actually wind up helping the state's general ski economy by luring skiers from Vermont and New Hampshire slopes. But, he says he wishes the industry would compete with the rest of New England by stressing *better* rather than *cheaper* skiing in Maine.

At Pleasant Mountain in Bridgton, where \$5 weekday lift prices are well above those charged at the other three areas, manager Tim Cyr says he welcomes the war. Calling this year's ski prices "unheard of," Cyr says the cheap rates will help, rather than hurt, the sport.

"A lot of people will tell you they're ruining skiing by making it too cheap," says the recent Cornell Hotel Management School graduate. "But, I say no, they're helping skiing by introducing all kinds of new people to the sport."

Managements at all four areas agree that although price might be the big factor in



Evergreen Valley's Dennise Whitley

cont. next page

getting skiers to the mountain the first time, it's the mountain itself, and the social life surrounding it, that will keep them coming back.

At Pleasant Mountain, one of the oldest areas in New England, there has always been a heavy reliance on the Portland crowd, which makes up nearly half the mountain's regular business. Cyr says he's hoping weekend rates of \$9.50, combined with solid intermediate skiing and a smattering of expert trails (about 20 per cent of the mountain) will lure skiers from North Conway to a less crowded area. Still, Cyr, who grew up skiing Pleasant Mountain, likes to think of the place as a family area, a spot where he can "stand in line and talk to people."

Although Sunday River is a little higher, Cyr considers Pleasant Mountain "the second largest ski area in Maine" because of lift capacity and other facilities, including about five miles of cross country trails.

To underline the mountain's "serious skiing" image, the area sponsors both racing and freestyle programs. Eight of the 20 youngsters attending last year's National Freestyle Championships hailed from Pleasant Mountain, and Bridgton's Frank



Sunday River's Bob Harkins

Howell took top place.

Sunday River also stresses "serious skiing," sponsoring for the first time this year a five-day ski camp in mid-November, supervised by Gould Academy Athletic Director Bob Harkins. The mountain makes its own snow, offering some of the earliest skiing in New England. Lifts open at 8 a.m. rather than 9 a.m., on weekends throughout the season to accommodate anxious skiers who have paid \$7.50 a ticket.

About 45 miles of cross country trails, maintained by the new Bethel Ski Touring Center, are located nearby the mountain.

The highest of the four, Sunday River stands behind its expert trail grooming firmly enough to offer an hour's free skiing to anyone wanting to inspect the slopes prior to investing in a ticket.

The mountain's likeable lift operator, Jack Dennis, supervises a special novice and beginner's area. Although there's been a lot of development activity lately,



Sunday River's Jack Dennis

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WATERFORD'S
ARTEMUS WARD —

GOOD ENOUGH FOR LINCOLN

He curled his hair, was considered a strange child even by his mother and, according to fellow townsman, Flora Abbott, once released a flock of hens inside a local Waterford schoolhouse.

Charles Farrar Browne, better known to the world of the mid-1850's as Artemus Ward — the brash, backwoods showman author of letters on politics, the theatre, literature and social trends — caught the fancy of the nation during the Civil War period, and captured the praise of President Lincoln himself. The humorist's "High Handed Outrage at Utica" was read by Lincoln to members of his cabinet prior to presenting them with the Emancipation Proclamation.

Ward, who was born in Waterford, never forgot his roots in Oxford County, which he once described as "that famous, fabled county 'way down East." He died, at age 33, in England, and was brought home to be buried in Elm Vale Cemetery, South Waterford. Although his work has disappeared into-near oblivion during this century, he remains recognized by scholars as the original legitimizer of homespun humor — the first to make use of American

diction, rhythm and figures of speech for comic effect — and a pioneer for such greats as Mark Twain and Will Rogers.

Printer, newspaperman and lecturer, Ward's talents were often staunchly defended by co-newspaper worker Abbott, writing in both the *Lewiston Sun* and *Advertiser Democrat* during the 1940's and 1950's. The feisty Mrs. Abbott, herself a Waterford fixture, castigated her neighbors for failing to adequately appreciate a native son. Ward's work was anything but outdated, she argued.

"How true it is that a man is without honor in his own home town!" wrote Mrs. Abbott, in her local newspaper column. "He may be famous in all the rest of the world, but his neighbors remember only his childish pranks... I will not go along with one of his neighbors, who I understand, said with contempt, 'Artemus Ward? Why he don't amount to nawthin'!' I wish more people in Waterford would prove to amount to as much. Abraham Lincoln is conceded to be one of the greatest presidents we ever had, and what is good enough for him, is good enough for me."

The following is an excerpt from an essay

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"...like ghost of sleighbells in a ghost of snow"
—Robert Frost

Making It

PHOEBE LEVINE'S WOOD HEAT —
YOURS FOR THE AXING



Phoebe Levine

Phoebe Levine says she likes to sell what she believes in. At the moment, the product is Jotul stoves, sold from a small, at-home business which leaves Phoebe plenty of time to teach yoga and organize a new art program at nearby Bridgton Academy. But, the commodity which Levine is really peddling is independence — at the root of her fledgling Free Branch Business.

"I use the name 'Free Branch' because Branch was my father's name and I believe I inherited my independence from him," explains Levine, seated at a makeshift office in the kitchen of her renovated North Bridgton farmhouse. Her pre-school age

son, Joshua, appears at regular intervals for supplies of saltines while we talk about the wood stove business.

"I met the woman who is importing Jotuls to this country while I lived and taught school in Portland," says Levine, who holds an art education degree. "We bought a stove and enjoyed it so much she suggested that I try selling them."

Levine set up shop at home a little over a year ago, selling what many believe to be the Cadillac of the woodstove line, models which are elegant in their completely cast iron simplicity — "Art That Warms" as Levine says in her ads. Customers calling at the

home get a chance to see the stoves at work. A small 602 box stove is stationed in the den. The larger 118 model is in the living room and a newly installed 404 cookstove is on display in the kitchen. The cookstove replaces an old, cherished Atlantic.

"It took me a year and a half to actually move the Atlantic out," confides Levine. "And, it nearly broke my heart. But, when you spend two days straight doing nothing but splitting wood, you're going to go after the most efficiency in a stove. We can get that from a Jotul."

Levine is well aware that heating with wood, although an attractive intellectual concept is, more than anything else, plain hard work. And she says she tries to forwarn potential stove buyers of possible pitfalls.

"We try to give them a whole education about how to burn wood. And we stress that there's a lot of commitment involved, that it's not an easy thing," she says.

Among the information passed on to customers is advice on the importance of stove and chimney maintenance. Levine says she disassembles her stoves each fall and rubs down all the moving parts with a wire brush to prevent soot build-up, which acts as an insulator and cuts stove efficiency. Chimneys are cleaned at least once a year by inserting chains and poles covered with burlap, in order to prevent fire hazard from creosote build-up there.

"People ought to treat a stove the same way they'd treat their furnace," cautions Levine. "You don't put picnic trash in your furnace. It doesn't belong in a stove, either."

The Levines encourage installation of smoke alarms as an added fire precaution. They have three in their eight-room farmhouse.

"It's very important to have a healthy fear of heating with wood," explains Levine. "It's something that should never be taken lightly."

Unless a person is among the lucky few who can afford to have their wood cut, split, delivered and stacked in the basement each year, bringing in a winter wood supply takes a lot of effort. Levine admits that figuring up the amount of time involved can get "discouraging."

"But, we've learned not to think of it as an unending thing year after year, but to just take each year as it comes," she says. "Once

the wood's in for the winter, it feels good to look back and know you have done it."

The family has found it's all right to let a few of their rooms go unheated in the winter. In fact, the children have gotten fewer colds since bedroom temperatures have dropped, says Levine.

For her and her family, heating with wood is "a personal thing."

"We started out with one little Jotul to help save on heat," she recalls. "Then we realized the room with the stove had become the most popular place in the house. We bought another stove and found we didn't need to turn the heat on at all. We love knowing there is an alternative to turning up the thermostat."

The heat hasn't come on for two winters. Seven cords of wood heat the rambling home.

Besides stoves, Free Branch has spread to the running arena, giving rise to three four-mile road races during the past year. The first, held last December, drew 27 runners. By the July Fourth race, the runners' ranks had swelled to 169. More than 100 turned out again this December. All competitors received Levine-designed "I run on natural energy" tee-shirts.

"Running is such a high. We decided it would be good to share that enthusiasm and business-sponsored races seemed a good way to do it," Levine explains.

Plans to sponsor a fall "run for fun" series were foiled because of the Levines' coordination of the Bridgton Art Show this year. But it's an idea whose time will come, eventually. Levine says she'd also like to design a brochure to hand out with her stoves explaining how to burn wood safely and efficiently, based on her family's experiences. She and her husband Jerry also hope to sponsor a wood heat seminar stressing how-to techniques.

"I've been teaching people about the things I believe in since I started as a camp arts and crafts counselor when I was 11 years old," grins Levine. "Although I was never athletic in high school, when I turned 24, I realized I could start doing something for myself. I took up running."

"Running, wood heat, art, yoga — they're all part of the same thing, aren't they? Ways to escape the rat race, which is why we're here."



BOB HARKINS:

Winter Sports Conditioning

by Kathy Zarcone

In the last few weeks before Maine ski areas' traditional Christmas openings, serious skiers get the jump on the rest of us at a series of ski camps run at many mountains.

At the five-day ski camp held in mid-November at Sunday River in Bethel, for instance, 111 young adults, most of them high schoolers, took advantage of the mountain's first-in-the-area snows during a rigorous training program directed by Gould Academy Athletic Director Bob Harkins. A joint effort of the school and Sunday River Skiway, the camp combined the expertise of 10 coaches from area facilities to talk technique and ski tuning, show films and supervise workouts.

Harkins, who teaches a course entitled "Lifetime Sports" at Gould, stresses physical conditioning as perhaps the single most important factor in the enjoyment of any sport. Although conditioning exercises for winter activities ought to have started well before the season began, he says it's still not too late to work on some last minute toning for downhill and cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and even those tough shoveling-out times associated with most snowmobiling.

The following conditioning regimen recommended by Harkins should be approached as a three-part sequence. It involves a warm-up period, work-out period and cooling-off period.

The warm-up period has, as its basis, stretching exercises which aim at increasing flexibility. The goal is to stretch and strengthen the body's major muscle groups in preparation

for heavier exercising. Although there are many activities that can be done, including running in place or jogging, Harkins suggests three important activities which anyone can do:

Hurdler's Exercise (stretches the quadriceps, or thigh muscles and hamstrings; the muscles running along the back of the thighs and knees) — Sit on floor, with right leg extended, and left leg bent inward at the knee. With both hands, reach toward the toes on the extended right leg. Then switch the position of both legs, reaching for the left leg, which is now extended. Repeat several times.

The Trunk Twist (stretches the hamstrings and certain abdominal muscles) — Stand with feet apart, arms held outstretched at sides. Start by rotating your upper torso to the left, bringing the right arm and hand in line with the left leg. Then, bending at waist, touch left foot with right hand.

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Bring right arm back up again, unbending at waist, rotate back to original position, so that the right arm is outstretched at side. Repeat with left arm and right leg.

Arm circles — Stand up straight, arms extended to sides. Rotate both arms forward as if making little circles with your hands. Repeat many times, then change direction. Aim for 30-40 sec. of forward and then backward circles, but take it slowly.

The work-out period offers more intense, vigorous exercising. This endurance training involves mainly running or cycling. Harkins says the average person can start out running a mile per day and work his or her way up to between one and three miles. If a mile seems unrealistic, he suggests setting a manageable amount of running time, such as 10 minutes, which is gradually built up to 30 minutes.

Although running is probably the best exercise for endurance training, cycling can also be added or substituted in the heavy work-out period. Again, it is important to set a realistic time limit. Ten minutes is average for beginners, with a gradual increase.

The cooling-off period activities are done following the heavy exercising and are about as exerting as the warm-up exercises.

Repeat some of the warm-up stretching exercises, along with some slow jogging.

Push-ups can be done, building up to 20 or 30 for men, and 10 for women.

Bent-leg Sit-ups can also be helpful, says Harkins. Lie on your back, drawing your legs up, bent at knees, and keeping feet flat. Use this position for sit-ups rather than the traditional type with legs extended. Aim for a number equal to push-ups.



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particular. "It was painted like a mouth in front. It looked like it would eat you up."

Karen is married to Richard Morse of Norway, a dairy farmer.

"Nothing could stop Rick from riding," says Karen of her husband. "I can't get him to do chores, but he can ride."

That's only part of the group. There's Gramps and Grandma Morse (Everett, age 70 and Lena, 67) both of South Paris.

"I didn't think I liked cold weather until I started snowmobiling," Lena says. The white-haired grandmother rides an Arctic Cat (because it's closer to the ground, she says) and keeps pace with the rest of them on Sunday outings.

Besides grandson Richard, there's Stanley, 19 and his wife Sherry, 22; granddaughter Peggie, 21 and her husband Albert Silver of Greenwood; Albert's brother Robert and his wife Lorelei, also of Greenwood; and their sons Billy and Tony.

"We usually start out around 8 or 9 in the morning," Trudy says, breaking the silence left when the men depart the kitchen for the outdoors.

"We'll have a bonfire, cook hot dogs and hamburgers. We may go to Locke Mills, Mount Abram or Evergreen Valley. Sometimes we just follow the leader and don't know where we're going."

She points to a news clipping on the wall about her son Stanley, who won second place for the homemade skidder he demonstrated in the Woodsmen's Field Day competition at the Fryeburg Fair.

Neighbors come to the door to ask the Morse family to stop over at their house for coffee when they're out on their machines.

"The men are always working," Trudy tells me. "Snowmobiling seems to be the only time we get to see them all."

As I prepare to leave, the men are revving up outside to show me what they couldn't express indoors. They have plowed the snow from in front of the garage to make a ski-jump tailored for snowmobiles.

They are still trying to "outdoo" each other as I drive away.



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by Ward which we believe supports the late Mrs. Abbott's contention:

It came roaring upon us just as the night was setting in, beating fearfully against the car windows and clogging up the wheels.

I am warranted in stating that it was one of the storms, leaving us in no doubt as to the drift of its meaning, for we soon found ourselves fast in a snowdrift. The "iron horse," as I think I have seen the locomotive called, made a few desperate plunges forward, and then seceded from us entirely, tearing down the track like the little bay beauty Flora Temple, with her tail done up in pepper-corns of an extraordinarily persuasive character. We were in the woods and the storm was raging with all the fury of a woman "corned." The black night, like the black knights of our popular bloodthirsty literature, laughed in a sardonic manner at our "snow of troubles," and then frowned fiercely upon us — the innocent and helpless. We denounced the railroad company in withering terms. If I used stronger language

than the rest — if I more thoroughly and convincingly laid bare the arrogant villainy of railroad monopolies, it must not be attributed to a desire to make myself conspicuous, but rather to the fact of my being a deadhead on the road. The refractory iron horse was led back, and we went slowly forward again.

The conductor said he'd get us into Portland that night, certain, whereupon a gentleman from Bangor said, "he hoped so, tew, for he'd rather gin a quarter than not reach hum next day — I had, I snore!" he added, glancing around the car. "Darned if I hadn't."

Standing late at night in the great dismal depot at Portland, it occurred to me that when, many years ago, the Indians sold the land upon which that beautiful and brilliant city now stands, for a jug of indifferent rum, they considerably cheated the whites. But this was only the churlish crotchet of the moment. Portland is all right and abounds in inimitable clams; likewise pretty girls, who like to get fellows on a piece of twine and pull them around in a distracting manner. Portland has got over expecting the *Great Eastern*, its chief amusement now consisting



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convalescence a little easier to bear.



of sliding down-hill and admiring the princely quarterly dividends (which are now declared three times a day) of the Grand Trunk Railway, which thoroughfare is managed by British gentlemen with side-whiskers, who have vainly searched many weary years for their long lost H. But, as Lord Palmerston felicitously remarks, "What's the hods, so long's we're happy?"

A city election was to occur next day, and, fearing that I might be elected alderman by one of those sublime uprisings of the honest masses which are sometimes witnessed when things assume a crisis shape, I hastily left by the morning train. I go northward toward the White Mountains, which loom up in the distance like the ghosts of immense giants. A portion of the journey is performed by stage, and it pleases me to find an old friend and fellow-soldier in the gentleman who holds the reins over the spirited team. We both fought in the Madawaska war, carrying death and devastation among the foe wherever we appeared. At the memorable and bloody battle of Pipsywipsy we were both fatally wounded three times by falling out of the baggage-wagon; but the eagles of victory perched upon our banners,

and in the language of my old friend, Dan Webster, "we ain't dead yet."

I am partial to sensations, and jumping from sunny and summery Madison Square to bleaky and breezy Maine is one of 'em, beyond peradventure. The snow is very deep. The people want it to go, but it's no go! The fences are completely buried, and in some instances, drifts have surrounded houses like the walls of a fort. But it is quite cheerful in the section to which I allude when compared to some parts of the state, where I am informed it snows continually for fifteen months in the year.

This is the happy land of baked beans and pure religion. Here "I guess I can dew it!" Here men get rich on farms which at first sight look as if they could produce nothing but crops of rocks. Here land which an Illinois farmer wouldn't have on his premises at any rate is held at an elevated figure. Here when a man don't clearly understand you, he says, "Hay?" and when he is astonished, "Sho!" Here people talk through their noses to a great and sometimes alarming extent, nature having kindly provided some of them

cont. page 50



BESSEY MOTOR SALES



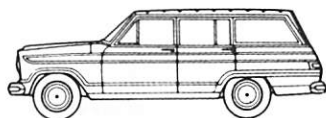
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Cont. from page 26

mountain personnel maintain they're more interested in well-groomed slopes and fine restaurants than in swimming pools, ice skating rinks and other paraphernalia.

For that, you'll have to head to Evergreen Valley. More off the beaten track than the other three areas, Evergreen has set out to make sure a stop there is well worth the trip. Besides intermediate skiing, including night skiing, you'll find ice skating, sleigh rides, 25 miles of cross country and snowmobile trails in the White Mountain National Forest, a pizza and beer shop, first-rate restaurant, lounge with entertainment and, if all goes well, indoor tennis and a heated pool.

"We like to think of the place as a skier's country club," explains Evergreen's Public Relations Director Dennise Whitley.



Mount Abram's Norton "Wimpy" Cross

A weekend lift ticket costs \$8. The area prides itself on short lift lines, thanks to modern chairlifts, and has a standing offer of a free ticket to anyone who has to wait in line more than 12 minutes.

The mountain's "we try harder" approach centers on active recruitment of local high school skiers, including members of the

Cont. next page

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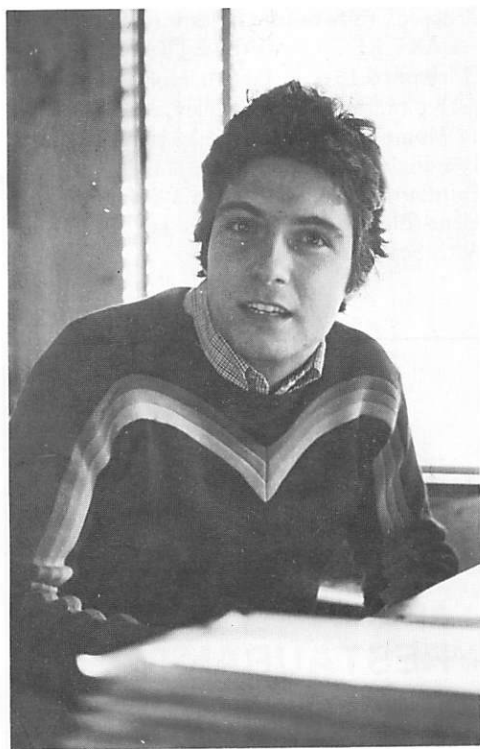
Your dollars' worth

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Route 26, Oxford,
Maine

Oxford Hills High School ski teams who have been given free use of the mountain to train, and a determination to keep personnel at their most accommodating and pleasant.

Among the extras for which the area would like to become known are the appearance of Santa Claus on skis with lolly pops for the kiddies this year, and a New Year's torchlight parade — all designed to promote "atmosphere with a touch of class."

At Mt. Abram, the emphasis is on low rates and good conditions and the rest of the things pretty much take care of themselves. And very nicely. There is a cafeteria and lounge area, complete with carpet, and a ski



Pleasant Mt.'s Tim Cyr

shop on the premises.

Weekend tickets are \$7. The mountain is offering again this year an "introduction-to-skiing" package which includes a free lesson, free skiing and free ski rentals.

This year, the sole expert trail has been widened and there are a few miles of cross country trails "for convenience."

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New
Year**



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Goings On

MUSIC

THE NORWAY-PARIS CHAPTER SPEBSQSA presents The Hillsmen Chorus in an evening of Down Home Harmony, Sat. Feb. 4, 8 p.m., Oxford Hills High School auditorium.

OXFORD HILLS HIGH SCHOOL BAND ENSEMBLE CONCERT, Tues., Jan. 17, 8 p.m., auditorium. Donations welcome.

ETC.

SENIOR CLASS-SPONSORED SUPPER, Jan. 27, 5 p.m., Lake Region High School cafeteria, preceeding Cape Elizabeth

basketball game.

SPORTS

LAKE REGION HIGH SCHOOL FACULTY vs. WJBQ WORKERS BASKETBALL, Jan. 4, 7 p.m., high school gymnasium. Proceeds to benefit sophomore class.

LAKE REGION BASKETBALL: Jan. 6 at Gorham, 6:15 p.m.; Jan. 10, Home with Gray, 6:15 p.m.; Jan. 13 at Greeley, 6:15 p.m.; Jan. 17, Home with Sacopee, 6:15 p.m.; Jan. 20 at Windham, 6:15 p.m.; Jan. 24, Home with Falmouth, 6:15 p.m.; Jan. 27, Home with Cape Elizabeth, 6:15 p.m.; Jan. 31, Home with Scarboro, 6:15 p.m.

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POLITICS

PLATFORM HEARINGS of the 1978 Maine Democratic Convention will be held at Bean's Restaurant at 7 p.m., Thurs., Jan. 12.

MUNICIPAL CAUCUSES OF OXFORD COUNTY DEMOCRATS, Sun., Feb. 12 to Sat., Feb. 18. For information contact State Committee members Paul McGuire (Bethel 824-2365); Olive Moore (South Paris 743-6969); Jim Wilfong (Stow 697-2200).

PARIS DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS for 1978-79, Thurs., Feb. 16, 7 p.m., at the South Paris Library.

THEATRE

THE BREAD AND PUPPET THEATRE in *Hail, Star of the Sea*, accompanied by the Word of Mouth Chorus, Wed., Jan. 4, 7:30 p.m., Bingham Hall Auditorium, Gould Academy, Bethel. The production features larger-than-life puppets acting against a background of a cappella singing. A voice

workshop follows the performance. Free admission.

ART

MARC JALBERT, Painting and Drawing; GARY AMBROSE, Wood Sculpture, at Hebron Academy's Hupper Gallery, Jan. 8 - Feb. 4, sponsored by Phoenix and the Maine State Commission on the Arts and Humanities. Gallery hours, weekdays 9 - 5, Sundays 2 - 5.

CONCERTS

PORTLAND SYMPHONY STRING QUARTET, Wed., Jan. 11, 8 p.m., Bates College Lounge.

JAZZ PIANIST MARIAN McPARTLAND Sun., Jan. 15, 8 p.m., Bates College Lounge.



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Sweet Finds



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Space age insulated over-boots, designed originally for winter mountain climbers but looking like they'd be more at home on an astronaut, are easily adaptable for mid-winter overland trips through deep snow to the compost pile or back wood lot. The boots are pulled on over regular outdoor boots. Their above-the-knee design both zips and snaps for maximum warmth and protection. They cost about \$35.



For some winter reading with a local slant, we recommend:

Hannibal Hamlin of Maine — Lincoln's First Vice-President by H. Draper Hunt. A look at Paris Hill's famous native son during his vice-presidential years, described by the author as the most interesting, revealing and frustrating period of his life, through the eyes of an associate professor of history at the University of Maine at Portland.

A Busy Year at the Old Squire's Farm, Haps and Mishaps at the Old Farm, by C. A. Stephens. Born in Bethel in 1844 and later a resident of Norway, Stephen's boyhood farm north of Norway Lake served as the setting for the

beloved tales which appeared regularly in the Boston weekly family magazine, *The Youth's Companion*, and were later incorporated in these, and other, books.

Pine Tree Ballads, by Holman F. Day. Reporter (with the *Lewiston Journal* newspaper, among others), novelist and Hollywood screen writer, Day chooses poetry to celebrate such rural happenings as setting hens and vealing calves, as well as a bizarre dancing turkey supposedly belonging to Ezra Stephens of Oxford County. The frontispiece of this collection of Day's poems, compiled in 1905, shows a photograph of Uncle Solon Chase, the sage of Chases' Mills, located just over the Buckfield line in Turner, who ran for President on the Greenback Ticket and called attention to his homespun philosophy by parading around the country behind a team of "Them Steers."

(Assistance in locating Sweet Find items is available by contacting **BitterSweet**.)



Poetry

I AM LOST

I am lost on oceans
of you:
Roaring lion seas, grey on grey.
Now a white winged cloud sloop
Tossing salt sky stallions
Now wood chrystals weathered,
Wormwood splinters dripping
On the edges
of my ocean.

Chris Hodgkins

HAVE A GOOD YEAR!



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THE READERS' ROOM

IS NOW AND EVER SHALL BE

Stuart bounded into the kitchen, first one off the school bus, ravenous. While I poured cider for them all, he doled out the cookies; and though my mind was rehearsing a speech for Grange meeting, my ears were being assaulted by the kids' chatter.

"Please, Mom, just one more glass? It's awful good."

"Don't let him drink it all, Mama, I want some for me."

"Silly, we got almost fifty gallons out of those apples in the barrel now, and besides, I picked most of them myself."

"You know what cider does to you. You better knock off now."

"How come your folks always make their own cider, Stu?"

"I dunno... how come, Mom?"

This question jolted me, suddenly, stirring many memories of cider pressings of earlier years. I could give Stuart no offhand answer, although I remembered well how it all began, how it came to be as it is now — we needed food for soul and body.

We had never made money from our farm, and that autumn we had nothing left but the limited supply of produce we had grown. We'd had a good crop of Ben Davis apples, supposedly worthless. We spent a week picking them, carrying them up the hill to the barn. With an old wooden hand-press, laboriously squeezing the juice from the apples, it had taken another week of hard work to get the cider canned and stored away down cellar. Those jugs of piquant sweet cider, instilled with our shared backaches and good times, had been our symbols of hope during that poverty-stricken winter.

No wonder it had become a tradition with us. Each fall we share the experiences of harvesting apples and preserving their juices. Each winter we drink our fill of home-grown cider with thankful pleasure.

WHY I GO BAREFOOT

It's human nature to like to see the stuck-up come un-stuck, and the high-and-mighty

cont. next page

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become low, or equalled out. Grandpa Judd was always ready to do his share to cut the supercilious down to size, as this report proves.

Grandfather had been a surgical patient on my ward for several days when his surgeon ordered lab tests on an early morning urine specimen. Ordinarily, this would have been a routine procedure, but Grandpa, recuperating, was reverting to his normal self.

A simpering young night nurse had constantly insulted the independent gent with her "How do we feel this morning, dearie?" and "It's time for us to get up now, Gramps." When she handed him the sterile specimen bottle and coyly commented, "Let's get a good sample for our nice doctor," he seized the chance for revenge.

As soon as the nurse was out of sight, Grandpa poured his glass of apple cider into the container, rang for Miss Super Silly and waited. When she spied the very pale liquid in the bottle, she wailed, "Oh, doctor won't like the looks of that, will he, dear?"

Grandfather drawled, "Well then, let's run it through again," and while the nurse first turned green, and then turned and ran, he quickly drank the bottle of sweet cider.

Sula Judd

Sula Judd is a registered nurse and mother of six.



(This space is reserved each month for readers' submissions. Material should be mailed to **BitterSweet**, One Madison Ave., Oxford, Me. 04270).



YOU DON'T SAY

Real Downeast humor, when it's spontaneous, can keep me laughing every time I am reminded of it. Like the time I went home to Bangor for the holidays and heard a rumor that a farm belonging to a friend of the family had burned. Anxious for the details, I asked my 40-year old uncle, "Why did it burn?" His reply: "Got too hot, I guess."

C.F.



LAURIE'S 743-2214

Your friends at Laurie's
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Who says you can't mix business and pleasure? Two Buckfield High School seniors are receiving school credit for their management of a new town restaurant. Dubbed "The Bridge House" by owner David Field, who worked all summer renovating the former laundromat, the restaurant is open 6 a.m. - 8 p.m., seven days a week, serving pancakes, eggs, bacon, soup, sandwiches, coffee and tea. Local crafts and Maine publications are also on sale. Music is provided by a 1940's shortwave radio console.

"We want the place to be a spot where people can come and communicate," explains Field.

Managers Hal Boyd and Richard Dillon agree. They will be behind the counter daily except for the hours of 10 a.m. - 1 p.m., when they'll be at school taking required courses. After graduation in June, they expect to be on there full-time.



Lyndell Farr

"Pass the salt," said at the home of Lyndell Farr in West Paris is likely to bring on an avalanche.

Mrs. Farr, a retired school teacher, boasts ownership of no fewer than 1166 salt and pepper shakers, from such far-away places as Japan and Hawaii. Miniature pieces of pie a la mode, paint brushes and buckets of paint, hamburgers and hot dogs, pot-belly stoves and liberty bells, are placed in display cases, strung along shelves and stashed inside closets.

"I've got so many now, I really can't display them to their best advantage, they're packed in so," sighs Mrs. Farr.

Her collection got started 50 years ago when she and her husband received several shakers as wedding gifts.

"It's been a good hobby," she says. "Interesting and inexpensive. It's the sentiment that makes each set special."

Information on the shakers, including the date they are received and by whom they are given, is entered into a large notebook for future reference. Among the most treasured sets is a hand-painted pair of old-fashioned pint milk cans, the 1000th set received from a friend, Avis Stellhorn.

Apparently there is no such thing as too many shakers.

"I still buy some for myself," smiles Mrs. Farr. "I can always find a place for them somewhere."

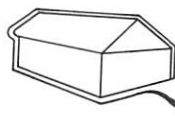


See Page 212 for Big Savings
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familiarity, a ritual that filled the kitchen with warm light and a crude elegance: rough boards, an antique stove, an old woman with gypsy eyes and a stone face.

"Good evening, Mrs Davis."

"Good evening, Sheriff. I'm glad you've come. I know you're a busy man."

The large man with the large hands looked at the old woman with the small hands lying before her in the apple peelings. He watched the woman's deep eyes dart at him and waited to continue.

"Tea, Sheriff?"

"Thank you, Ma'am. No."

A pause. The heartbeat of the clock.

"It's like I told you, Sheriff. It's the weathervane John made. That black stallion on the cupola. They've taken it in the night. Didn't hear a thing. But this morning I saw right off it was gone."

The big man shifted his feet. She stared into the darkness beyond the kitchen window. An idea moved behind her eyes like an old black crow rising silently from a barren tree.

"John was some proud of that, Sheriff. Made it himself and all." The gnarled little hands jerked alive and fluttered to the pleats of her plain dress where they danced like crabs.

The big man spoke slowly. "They've been stealing these, Ma'am, and selling 'em down in Boston for big money. Antique thieves. They use spikes just like phone men use to climb poles. Go right up the corner of the barn."

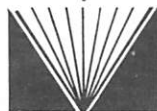
The big man stopped and waited for the right words, the words he always saved for last.

"It's pretty hard to get 'em back, Mrs. Davis. But we'll do the best we can. There never was a better looking weathervane around than that black stallion of John's. Fine piece of work."

For a moment the crabs stopped moving on the woman's dress. Her lips twitched without speaking and then she whispered to the apples, "Thank you."

cont. next page

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Cont. from previous page

The big man lumbered towards the door and pulled on his gloves. "I'll be looking around outside now, Mrs. Davis and getting back to you later in the week. I'll let you know if we hear anything."

He was through the door quickly and gone. Once into the crisp fall night he snapped on the flashlight, made his familiar stroll across the yard to the barn and, with one large arm, jerked open the hinged door. The flashlight stabbed across the empty stalls that once held heavy chested teams of work horses and stopped at a large wooden barrel. An iron rod protruded from the top of the barrel and a proud black stallion pranced motionlessly at the top of the rod. The iron horse danced in charcoal beauty on the weathervane. And the weathervane stood in the barrel where the big man placed it every fall so it would not be stolen.

And in the cool kitchen the old woman remembered she had not offered him an apple and then other thoughts flew like crows behind her eyes and the house was filled with the pumping heart of the banjo clock.



Let us know about your goings-on. Listings should be sent to **BitterSweet** by the 15th of the month preceeding publication.

*So you have a friend or relative you think would make good reading? Send a short write-up and photograph, if possible, to Folk Tales, **BitterSweet**, One Madison Ave., Oxford, Me. 04270. **BitterSweet** also welcomes submissions of sweet finds, photographs, poetry and fiction. Payment for all material will be made upon acceptance.*

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with noses like covered bridges, each nostril being large enough to let a double team of words go through. Here the people have eccentricities enough to be interesting. Here they can invent, chop, swap, work, and (if necessary) fight. Here there is maple sugar, virtue, shrewdness, strong arms and big chests, pickerel, rosy cheeks and true hearts, ever-busy knitting-needles, cream, an undying love for Bunker Hill, honey, patriotism, stocking yarn, mountains, ponds, hoop-poles, churches, school-houses, pine logs, scenery that knocks Switzerland into a disordered chapeau, and air so pure that the New-Yorker is sorry he can't bottle some of it and carry it to the metropolis for daily use.

I must not forget to mention a rather singular circumstance that occurred in my voyage from Portland to Boston per steamboat. I went aboard, secured a state-room, and proceeded to fall into one of those sweet slumbers which ever reward the honest man and Son of Temperance. On awaking in the night, it occurred to me that I would go on deck and converse with the man at the helm in regard to nautical affairs, as I was an old sea-dog myself, having had perilous experience on the Oxford and Cumberland Canal in the capacity of assistant chambermaid. The man was not at the helm, but I discovered that the steamer was going bravely ahead, taking a large wharf and a considerable portion of Portland with her. I laughed one of my "silvery laughs," but didn't say anything to anybody about the matter, because it was such an excellent joke on Portland. I don't remember to have ever read of a more singular circumstance. It is true that certain unprincipled persons, who I have reason to believe are Secessionist at heart, stated that the boat remained tied at her wharf all night, and did not leave Portland in consequence of the storm; but I confidently call upon Longfellow, Holmes, Everett, and the rest of the boys in Boston, who met me at the wharf the next morning, to refute the calumny. Going from Portland to Boston in a steamboat with a large wharf and several flourishing warehouses attached is a rather large thing to do, I candidly confess, but I did it.



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DRINKS THAT WARM

There's no better way to take off a chill than with a piping hot drink, which not only warms the body but soothes the spirit. While coffee and tea are important ingredients in our year-round diet, a blustery winter's day is a good time to try something other than staples.

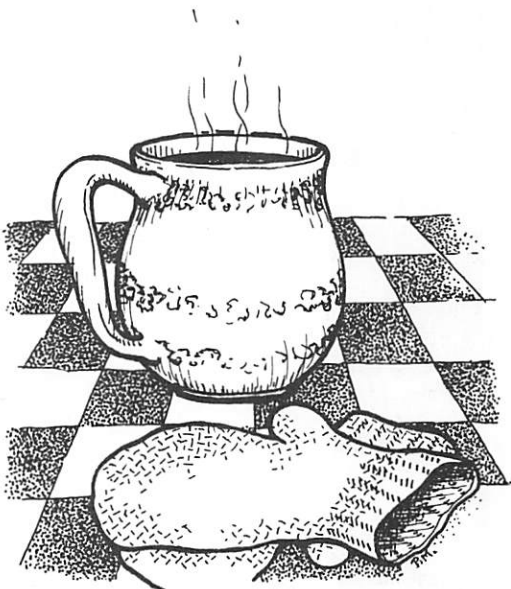
A little doctoring can transform that ordinary cup of tea or coffee into something special.

Try adding equal parts milk and light cream, heated over low heat and beaten until foamy, to a batch of hot coffee. (The hot coffee and hot milk mixture are poured simultaneously into serving cups.) The result is *café au lait*, a classic French combination.

To spice up your tea, combine six cups of water with an inch-long stick of cinnamon and 1 teaspoon of cloves. Heat to boiling. Add 2½ tablespoons of black tea, cover and steep for five minutes, then strain. Heat ¾ cup of orange juice, 2 tablespoons of lemon juice and ½ cup of sugar to boiling. Stir and add to hot tea.

Mixed spices are the key ingredient in a traditional favorite American drink, hot mulled cider, which is one of our favorites. Mix 1 teaspoon of whole cloves, 1 teaspoon of whole allspice and ¼ teaspoon of salt with a 4-inch stick of cinnamon, a dash of ground nutmeg and ½ cup of brown sugar. Add mixture to 2 quarts of cider in a large pan. Slowly bring to boil. Cover and simmer 25 minutes. Remove spices and serve in warmed mugs.

Red wine, port or sherry may also be mulled. Combine slightly less than ¾ cup of water with 1¼ cups of sugar, 2 dozen whole cloves, 1½ crushed nutmegs, 3 sticks of cinnamon and peelings from a lemon and an orange. Boil for 5 minutes. Strain, add 2 cups



of hot lemon juice. Heat and add 2 bottles of either red wine, port or sherry. Serve hot with slices of orange, lemon or pineapple, studded with cloves, if desired.

Hot buttered rum has been a Yankee tradition since the early 18th century when rum distilled from imported West Indian molasses ran the New England economy. Fill a warm tumbler with 1 tablespoon of butter, 1 teaspoon confectioner's sugar, ¼ cup boiling water and ¼ cup dark rum. Round off with more boiling water and stir until well mixed. Top with fresh nutmeg.

The hot whiskey toddy also harkens back to colonial days. Dissolve a lump of sugar in a glass half filled with boiling water. Add a shot of whiskey and a twist of lemon. Sprinkle with nutmeg.

For those who prefer to leave the whiskey with the colonists, heat ¼ cup of milk and ½ cup of soda (any flavor) with ½ teaspoon of vanilla extract for a hot, sweet, spirit-free bracer.





Real Estate

Can You Place It?



Last month's antique brass door handle actually graces the entrances to two separate stores in the area: Thurlow's Furniture in Bridgton, and L. M. Longley & Son in Norway. We spotted this month's more modern variation someplace in Bethel.

The view of the bridge appearing in the November issue lies off Rt. 117 between Harrison and Bridgton.

Looking for a Home?



WEST PARIS - This older Country Home has attached shed and barn plus a garage and workshop. Located on 17 beautiful acres. Mostly cleared fields. Much time and money have gone into fixin' up this lovely 150 yr. old farmhouse. It has new roof, plumbing, wiring, water pump, hot water tank and is insulated. There's a new modern kitchen, carpeted living room, 3 bedrooms, full bath, laundry room, and a good water supply. It isn't completed but with a little effort you can have your home in the Country for only **\$33,000**



COUNTRY HOME - We found an older renovated homestead on 25 secluded acres. It has over 1000' road frontage. Year round mountain brook runs through property. There are 3 bedrooms, living room, dining room, panelled kitchen, beautiful new bath, utility room, shed and barn attached. Well water, heated by stoves. Low taxes **\$27,500**

EAST OTISFIELD - 15 wooded acres on blacktop road. Completely studded with large growing pine, some hardwood. Could be cleared to have lovely view of Thompson Lake. Good investment. Make nice building site. **\$10,000**

OTISFIELD — Bonny Hill Road - 13 secluded acres with 2 hunting camps plus bunkhouse. Situated in pine grove. 3 nice fields. One camp is 14' x 36'. The other is 10' x 4'. Bunkhouse 10' x 10'. Some furnishings. Well water **\$16,500**

OTISFIELD - One room, winterized camp. Completely furnished. Elect., well water. Brook on property. Right of way to Crooked River. Good hunting area **\$4,300**

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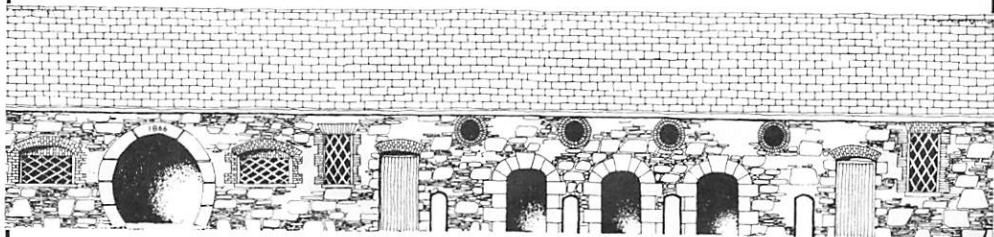
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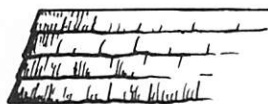
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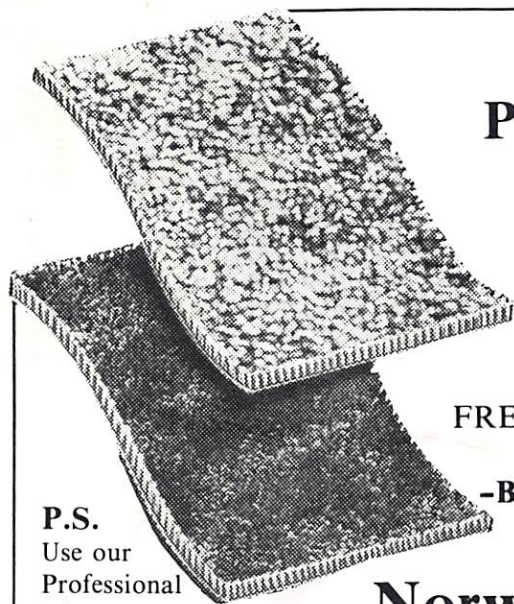
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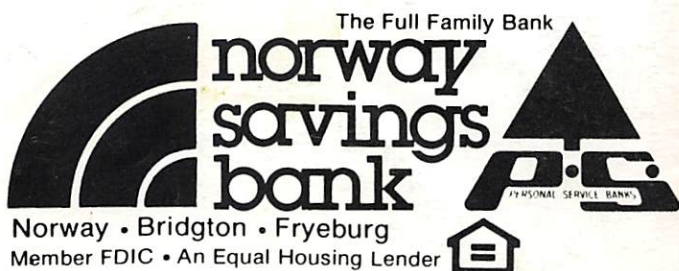
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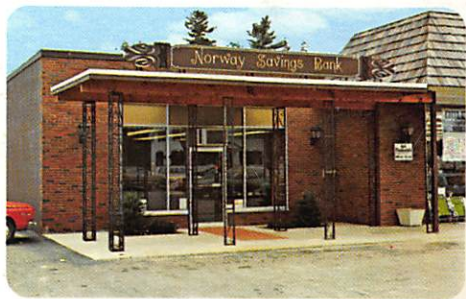
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